



VIDYUT CHORA



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A JAINA TALE

Amar Chitra Katha

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Vidyut Chora



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The story of Vidyut Chora is retold from Shvakotyacharya's classic in Kannada, VADDARADHANE.

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VIDYUT CHORA

PRINCE VIDYUT AND YAMADANDA, SON OF THE KOTWAL, WERE STUDYING UNDER THE SAME GURU AT HIS ASHRAMA IN THE FOREST. ONE DAY, WHEN THEY HAD SOME LEISURE —





NO! I WON'T.
NOT IF MY RUSE
WORKS.

YOU HAVE WON,
YAMADANDA! YOU
HAVE WON THIS
TIME.

BUT ONE DAY WHEN
YOU ARE THE KOTWAL,
I WILL COMMIT A CRIME
YOU CANNOT SOLVE AND
SEE THAT YOU ARE
HANGED.

HANGED,
DO YOU
HEAR?

IF YOU EVER
MISBEHAVE
WHEN I AM
THE KOTWAL...

...I WILL SEE
THAT YOU ARE
ARRESTED AND
BEATEN UP!



THE YEARS PASSED. VIDYUT AND YAMADANDA FINISHED THEIR STUDIES AND WERE READY TO LEAVE THEIR GURU'S ASHRAMA.

YOU WILL MAKE A GOOD KING, VIDYUT. BUT DON'T PLAY PRANKS, OR YOU WILL LOSE MEN YOU VALUE.

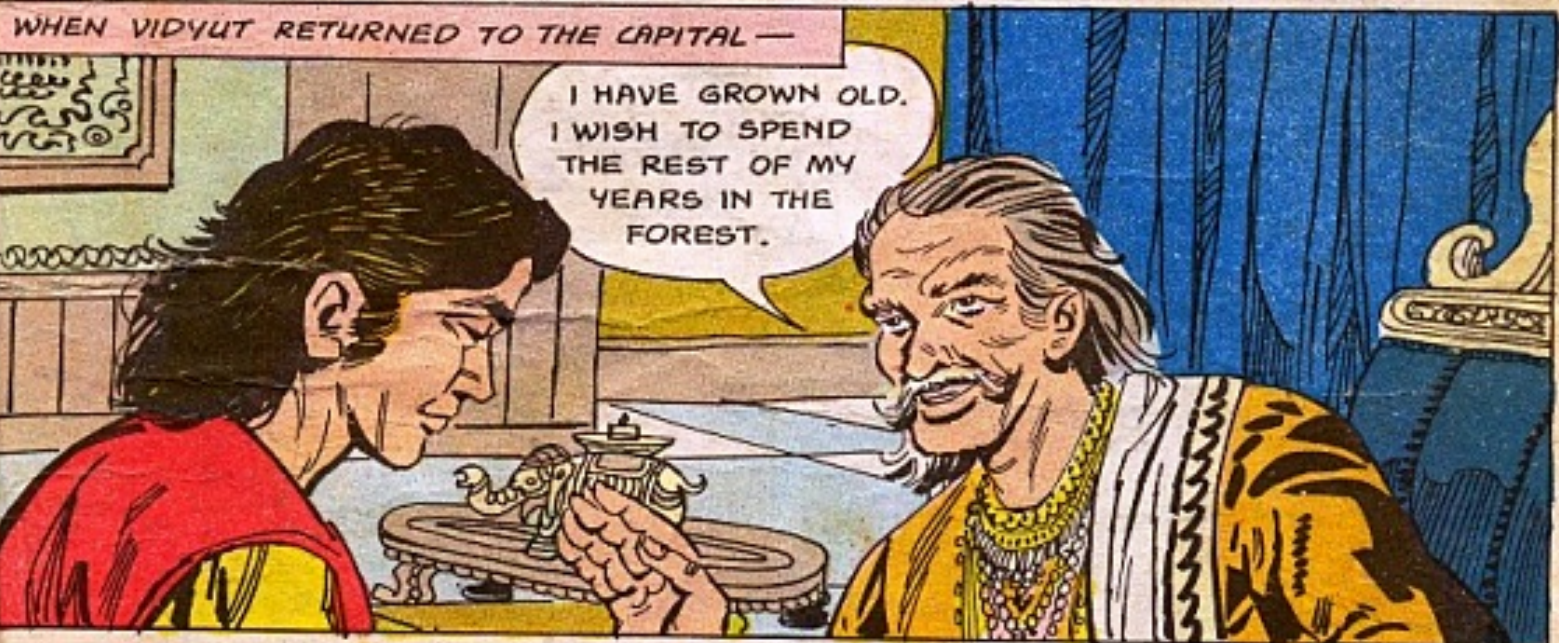


AND YOU WILL MAKE AN EXCELLENT KOTWAL, YAMADANDA, PROVIDED YOU KEEP YOUR WITS ABOUT YOU.



WHEN VIDYUT RETURNED TO THE CAPITAL —

I HAVE GROWN OLD. I WISH TO SPEND THE REST OF MY YEARS IN THE FOREST.



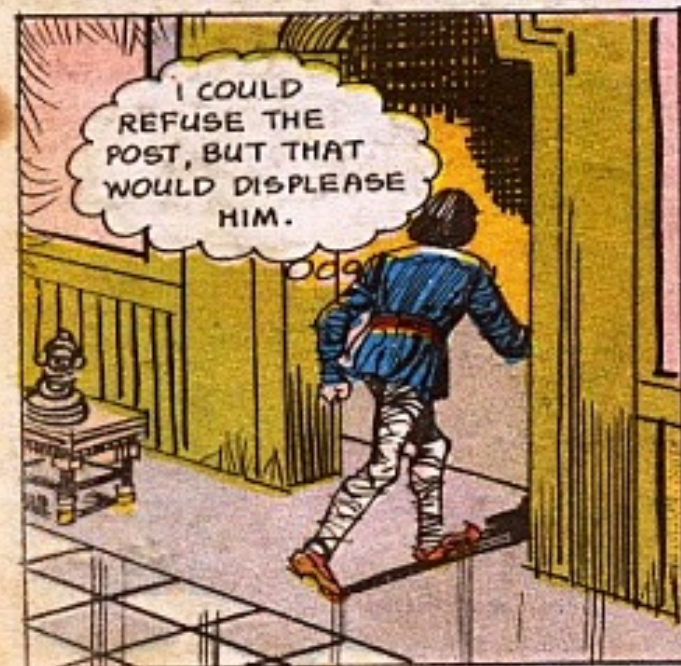
RULE WELL AND WISELY, MY SON.



YAMADANDA'S FATHER TOO RENOUNCED THE WORLD AND RETIRED TO THE FOREST.

I'LL HAVE TO APPOINT A NEW KOTWAL.





WHEN VIDYUT WAS INFORMED OF HIS FRIEND'S DEPARTURE —



AT LAST ONE OF THEM MET WITH SUCCESS.





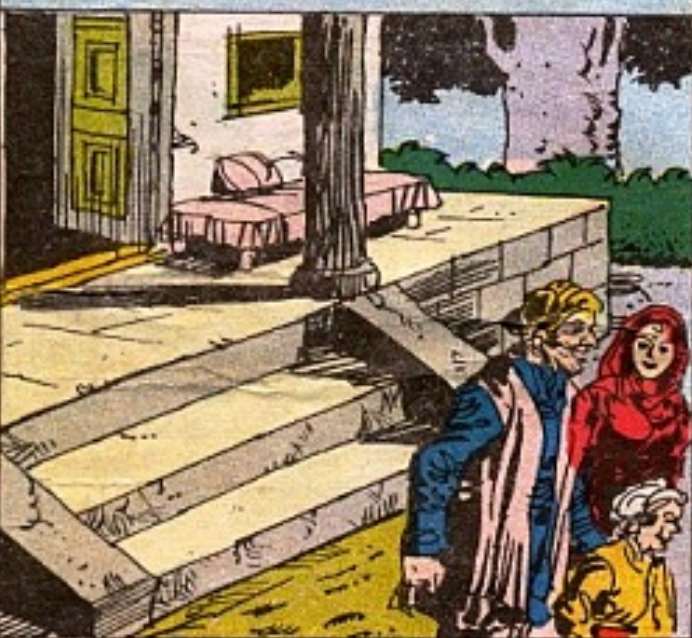
VIDYUT ENTRUSTED THE CARE OF HIS KINGDOM TO HIS FAITHFUL MINISTER, PURUSHOTHAMA, AND HIS ADVISER, VAJRASENA HEGDE, AND SECRETLY LEFT FOR MITHILA.



MITHILA WAS A PEACEFUL KINGDOM OF LAW-ABIDING SUBJECTS.



AS ROBBERY WAS ALMOST UNKNOWN, NOBODY LOCKED THEIR DOORS.



SO YAMADANDA, THE KOTWAL, WAS SHOCKED WHEN A CITIZEN CAME ONE DAY TO COMPLAIN OF A THEFT.



WE HAD GONE OUT AND WHEN WE RETURNED WE FOUND THAT THE HOUSE HAD BEEN RANSACKED!

I WILL SEND MY MEN WITH YOU.





YAMADANDA BEGAN LOOKING FOR CLUES.

THERE'S A FAINT FOOTPRINT HERE...



...THE FOOTPRINT OF A SMALL FOOT.



PEOPLE ARE SAYING THERE'S A GANG OF CRIMINALS ON THE LOOSE.

DON'T LISTEN TO RUMOURS.



ALL THE ROBBERIES ARE THE WORK OF THE SAME MAN...AND WE'LL CATCH HIM BEFORE LONG.

I AM SURE YOU WILL. BUT...



...BUT SOME OF THE PEOPLE HERE ARE GETTING RESTLESS.

SARKAR!







IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, YAMADANDA QUESTIONED HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE IN THE HOPE OF UNEARTHING SOME INFORMATION THAT COULD LEAD TO THE CAPTURE OF THE THIEF...



... BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS.

ONE WOULD THINK I WAS HUNTING A PHANTOM.



ONLY A PERSON WHO HAS MASTERED THE ART OF KARAPATAVIDYA*, COULD BE SO ELUSIVE.



AND I KNOW OF ONLY ONE WHO HAS MASTERED THAT ART.

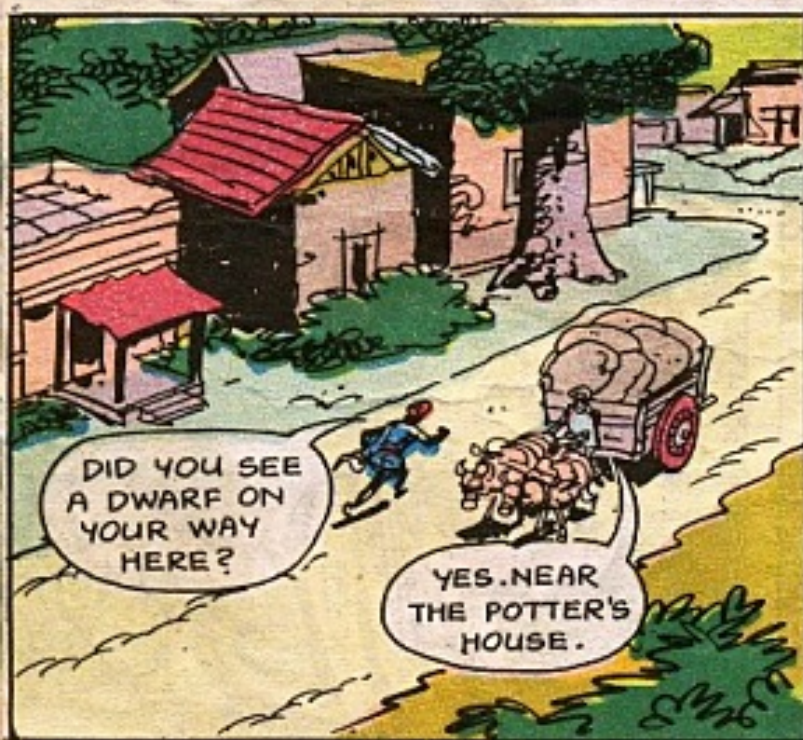


COULD HE HAVE FOLLOWED ME HERE TO ...

OH, A TODDY SHOP!

















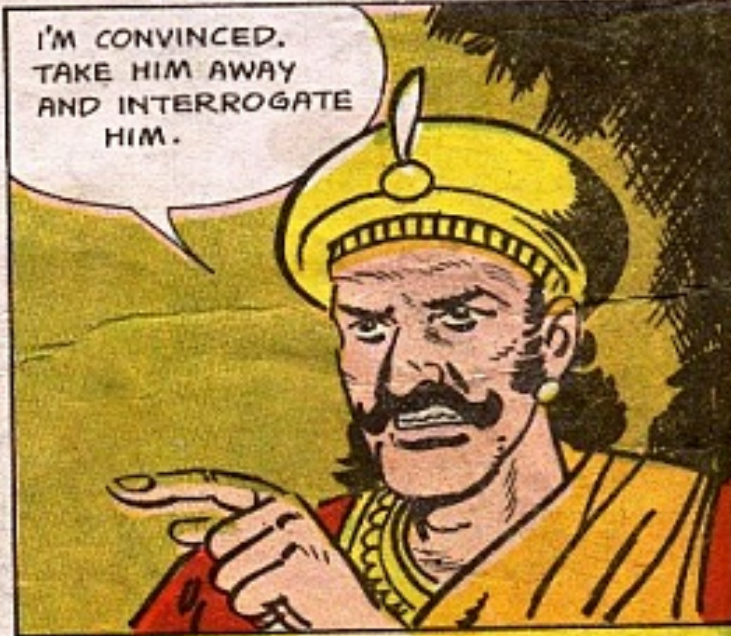




... AND THE MAID REGAINED HER ORIGINAL FORM.



I'M CONVINCED. TAKE HIM AWAY AND INTERROGATE HIM.



THE GAME HAS GONE TOO FAR, MAHARAJ. LET'S TELL THE KING THE WHOLE STORY.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



YOU ARE THE KOTWAL. I, THE ACCUSED. DO YOUR DUTY.





THROUGHOUT THE INTERROGATION, VIDYUT MAINTAINED THAT HE WAS INNOCENT.



AND AS THE NIGHT WORE ON, YAMADANDA BEGAN TO FEEL ANXIOUS.



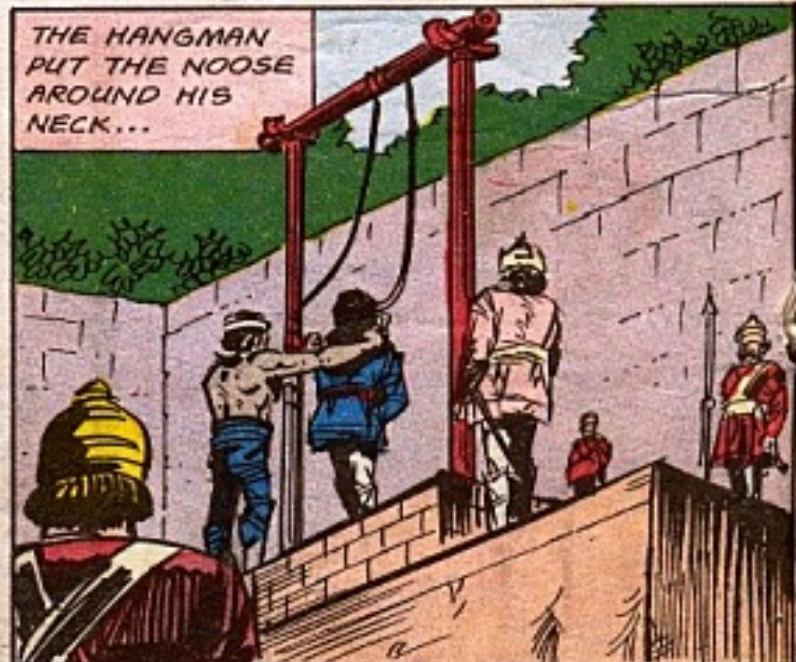
VIDYUT DID NOT CONFESS. AND THE NEXT MORNING —



THE KOTWAL WAS LED TO THE GALLOWS.



THE HANGMAN PUT THE NOOSE AROUND HIS NECK...



... AND WAS ABOUT TO PULL THE ROPE WHEN —



AT THE PALACE, AFTER THE KING HAD BEEN TOLD WHAT HAD HAPPENED —



AFTER HE HAD FINISHED.

IS HE TELLING
THE TRUTH? OR
IS THIS A CLEVER
RUSE TO SAVE
THE KOTWAL?

JUST THEN —

MAHARAJ!

I HAVE A MESSAGE
FOR YOU FROM
VAJRASENA.

SO HE IS
INDEED
A KING!

NO TROUBLE,
I HOPE.

NO. BUT MY
MINISTERS SAY
I HAVE STAYED
AWAY TOO LONG.

THEY HAVE
REQUESTED
ME TO
RETURN.

IT IS INDEED
A PITY THAT I HAVE
MADE YOUR
ACQUAINTANCE
SO LATE...

